

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Application No.: 10/588,086

Attorney Docket No.: 079826

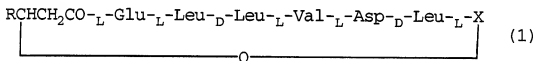
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-19 (canceled).

20. (currently amended): ~~The~~^A method for improving storage stability of an oil-based thickening gel composition as claimed in claim 11, comprising adding (c) a tocopherol compound to an oil-based thickening gel composition comprising (a) an anionic surfactant having a lipopeptide structure, (b) water and/or a polyhydric alcohol having a valence of 3 or more and (d) from 30 to 99% by mass of an oil component being one or more selected from polyoxyethyleneglyceryl ether fatty acid esters and polyoxyethylene sorbitol ether fatty acid esters, and wherein (a) the anionic surfactant having a lipopeptide structure is surfactin represented by the following formula (1)



and/or salts thereof,

wherein R is isoalkyl group having 11 carbon atoms, X is leucine, the polyhydric alcohol is water and glycerin, the tocopherol compound is δ -tocopherol and the oil component is polyoxyethylene (20) glyceryl triostearate and glycerin tri-2-ethylhexanoate, and wherein the storage stability comprises preventing separation of the composition.

